

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 IO-13 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06

OMB-01 COME-00 EB-07 LAB-04 SIL-01 DHA-02 HEW-04 /091 W

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R 231437Z SEP 76

FM AMEMBASSY ANKARA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4975

INFO AMCONSUL ISTANBUL

AMCONSUL IZMIR

AMCONSUL ADANA

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SECTION 1 OF 2 ANKARA 7313

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, ELAB, TU

SUBJECT: DISK "SPONTANEOUS" STRIKE CALLED-OFF

REF: A) ANKARA A-79 B) ANKARA 7121 C) ISTANBUL 3740

D) ADANA 242

1. SUMMARY: GOVERNMENT OPPOSITION, LACK OF WIDESPREADR
PUBLIC SUPPORT AND INABILITY TO CREATE A UNITED LABOR FRONT
SEEM TO HAVE RESULTED IN AT LEAST TEMPORARY DEFEAT FOR
DISK WHICH HAD LAST WEEK DECLARED GENERAL MOURNING THROUGHOUT
COUNTRY UNTIL NATIONAL FRONT IS TOPPLED FROM POWER "BY
CONSTITUTIONAL AND DEMOCRATIC MEANS". DISK-AFFILIATED UNIONS HAVE
OBSERVED THE GENERAL MOURNING BY "SPONTANEOUS" STRIKES; HOWEVER,O
WORKERS AT MOST SITES BEGAN RETURNING TO WORK ON TUESDAY
AFTER ARREST OF DISK LEADERSHIP AND MANY WORKERS ON CHARGE
OF INCITING WORKERS TO STAGE ILLEGAL STRIKES. KEMAL TURKLER,
DISK PRESIDENT, REPORTEDLY ISSUED CALL FOR DISK WORKERS
TO REUTNR TO WORK, DECLARING HOWEVER, THAT GENERAL MOURNING
AND DISK OPPOSITION TO NATIONAL FRONT GOVERNMENT AND STATE
SECURITY COURT (SSC) BILL WOULD CONTINUE. END SUMMARY.

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2. AFTER THE CALL BY DISK CONFEDERATION PRESIDENT KEMAL

TURKLER FOR "GENERAL MOURNING" AND HIS INVITATION FOR WORKERS TO OBSERVE MOURNING IN WAY THEY SAW FIT, AT LEAST FIVE DISK MEMBER UNIONS WENT OUT ON STRIKE IN ELEVEN CITIES. ACCORDING TO PRESS REPORTS AND GOVERNMENT STATEMENTS STRIKE WAS MOST EFFECTIVE AMONG MUNICIPAL GARBAGE WORKERS AND BUS DRIVERS IN ANKARA, ISTANGUL, AND IZMIR, AMONG REFINERY WORKERS AT ALIAGA (IZMIR) AND IPRAS (IZMIT) REFINERIES, AMONG STEEL WORKERS AND METAL WORKERS IN EREGLI, ISTANBUL AND BURSA AND AT SEVERAL TEXTILE SITES IN ISTANBUL. ON SATURDAY, SEPT. 18, DISK ALSO HELD SMALL LEGAL DEMONSTRATIONS AGAINST NATIONAL FRONT GOVERNMENT AND STATE SECURITY COURTS BILL IN ANKARA AND ISTANBUL. THE TURNOUT WAS NOT LARGE AND THE DEMONSTRATIONS PASSED RELATIVELY UNEVENTFULLY.

3. THE EMPLOYERS CONFEDERATION TOOK A STRONG STAND AGAINST THE POLITICALLY-INSPIRED STRIKE. THE SEC GEN OF THE CONFEDERATION WARNED MONDAY THAT UNLESS WORKERS RETURNED TO WORK THEY FACED LOSS OF STRIKE AND WEEK-END PAY, CANCELLATION OF EMPLOYMENT CONTRACTS WITHOUT NOTICE OR SEVERANCE PAY AND POSSIBILITY OF COURT ACTION TO RECOVER LOSSES SUFFERED BY EMPLOYERS. THE CHAIRMAN OF THE CONFEDERATION CLAIMED ON SEPT. 20 THAT 100,000 WORKERS HAD BEEN ON STRIKE SEPT. 17 BUT THIS NUMBER HAD BEEN REDUCED TO 30,000 BY SEPT. 20.

4. TURK-IS CONFEDERATION PRESIDENT HALIL TUNC REMAINED OPPOSED TO DISK CALL AND "SPONTANEOUS" STRIKES WHICH RESULTED. TUNC IS NOT OPPOSED TO THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE STATE SECURITY COURTS PROVIDED THAT LEGISLATION ESTABLISHES JURISDICTION OF THE SSC OVER CRIMES VIOLATING THE SECULAR CHARACTER OF THE TURKISH STATE, AS COVERED BY ARTICLE 163 OF THE TURKISH PENAL CODE. THE GOVERNMENT'S PRESENT VERSION OF THE BILL DOES NOT INCLUDE PROVISIONS FOR ARTICLE 163.

5. THROUGHOUT THE PAST WEEK DISK PRESIDENT TURKLER AND TURK-IS PRESIDENT TUNC HAVE ENGAGED IN AN ACRIMONIOUS PUBLIC EXCHANGE ON THE ROLE OF LABOR-UNIONS IN A DEMOCRATIC SOCIETY, THE STATE SECURITY COURT BILL AND THE STRIKE ITSELF. TURKLER ACCUSED TUNC OF BETRAYING THE WORKING CLASS BY REFUSING TO COOPERATE WITH DISK AND THE REPUBLICAN PEOPLE'S PARTY IN UNITED OPPOSITION AGAINST THE NATIONAL FRONT GOVERNMENT AND THE SSC BILL. TURKLER LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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ADDED THAT HE WAS CONVINCED, HOWEVER, THAT THERE ARE "PROGRESSIVE UNIONISTS AND WORKERS WITHIN TURK-IS WHO WILL FORM AN ALLIANCE WITH DISK AGAINST THE STATE SECURITY COURTS AND THE NATIONAL FRONT". TUNC, IN TURN, REITERATED HIS OPPOSITION TO ANY FORM OF ALLIANCE WITH DISK, BY ACCUSING DISK OF AIMING AT "DESTROYING LIBERAL DEMOCRACY". HE ADDED THAT THE MAIN REASON FOR SPLITS AMONG LABOR UNIONS IN TURKEY WAS IDEOLOGICAL STANCE OF

DISK AND INTERFERENCE BY POLITICAL PARTIES IN TRADE UNION AFFAIRS.

6. THE REPUBLICAN PEOPLES PARTY (RPP) AND ITS LEADER, BULENT ECEVIT, HAVE STIFFENED THEIR OPPOSITION TO THE SSC BILL AND HAVE CONTINUED TO CALL FOR AN ALLIANCE OF DISK AND TURK-IS. ECEVIT, HOWEVER, HAS BEEN CAREFUL TO KEEP HIS DISTANCE FROM THE DISK "SPONTANEOUS" STRIKE, AND REPORTEDLY, ASSISTED IN PERSUADING MUNICIPAL WORKERS TO RETURN TO WORK. HE DID NOT, HOWEVER, MAKE ANY PUBLIC STATEMENTS CRITICAL OF THE DISK ACTION.

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OMB-01 COME-00 EB-07 LAB-04 SIL-01 DHA-02 /087 W

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7. GOVERNMENT REACTION TO THE STRIKE WAS GENERALLY MODERATE AND EFFECTIVE. DECLARING THAT GOVERNMENT POLICY MUST BE MADE IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE CONSTITUTION AND NOT IN RESPONSE TO STREET AGITATION AND ILLEGAL STRIKES, THE GOVERNMENT RESISTED THE THREAT OF MARTIAL LAW CORRECTLY ASSUMING PUBLIC DISAFFECTION FOR THE STRIKERS, AND ALLOWED THE COURTS AND PUBLIC PROSECUTORS TO HANDLE THE PROBLEM. THE MINISTRY OF JUSTICE ANNOUNCED THAT IT HAD OPENED COURT CASES AGAINST 1760 WORKERS FOR ILLEGAL STRIKE ACTIVITIES AND OFFENCES AGAINST PUBLIC ORDER IN VARIOUS PARTS OF THE COUNTRY. EIGHT HUNDRED AND FIFTY WORKERS AT THE GOVERNMENT OWNED ALIAGA OIL REFINERY WERE TERMINATED

FOR ILLEGAL STRIKE ACTIVITIES. ON TUESDAY, IN ISTANBUL, THE
SECGEN OF DISK WAS ARRESTED AND CHARGED WITH INCITING
WORKERS TO STAGE AN ILLEGAL STRIKE. DISK HEADQUARTERS WERE
SEARCHED UNDER COURT ORDER IN AN EFFORT TO FIND INCrimINATING
EVIDENCE DIRECTLY TYING DISK TO THE WAVE OF "SPONTANEOUS"
STRIKES. WITH A WARRANT OUT FOR HIS ARREST, AND IN AN
APPARENT EFFORT TO FORESTALL CONSPIRACY CHARGES, DISK PRESIDENT
TURKLER ANNOUNCED THAT WHILE GENERAL MOURNING WOULD
CONTINUE, HE WAS ASKING ALL DISK WORKERS TO RETURN TO WORK.
(NOTE: ON SEPT. 23, HIGHER COURT IN ISTANBUL ACTING ON DISK
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APPEAL ORDERED RELEASE OF TURKLER AND DISK STEERING COMMITTEE.)

8. COMMENT: THE DISK STRIKE IS THE BIGGEST POLITICAL
LABOR RESISTANCE AGAINST THE GOVERNMENT SINCE 1970 WHEN
CERTAIN TURK-IS UNIONS IN ISTANBUL JOINED DISK DEMONSTRATIONS
AGAINST THE THEN DEMIREL GOVERNMENT'S ATTEMPTS TO AMEND EXISTING
LABOR LEGISLATION. THE 1970 ACTION ULTIMATELY RESULTED IN
GQMZ IMPOSITION OF MARTIAL LAW IN THE ISTANBUL AREA. IN
THAT CONTEXT, IT IS SIGNIFICANT THAT DISK THIS TIME HAS ALMOST
CERTAINLY FAILED IN ITS EFFORTS TO AROUSE PUBLIC SYMPATHY
FOR ITS RESISTANCE TO THE NATIONAL FRONT GOVERNMENT AND THE
STATE SECURITY COURTS BILL. FURTHERMORE, AT LEAST TEMPORARILY,
IT SEEMS TO HAVE FAILED IN ITS EFFORTS TO SPLIT TURK-IS BY
APPEALING TO THE MORE REFORMIST ELEMENTS OF TURK-IS WHO ARE
OPPOSED TO THE NATIONAL FRONT GOVERNMENT AND SYMPATHETIC TO AN
ALLIANCE BETWEEN TURK-IS AND THE RPP. THE FAILURE OF THE
STRIKE SUGGESTS THAT DISK DOES NOT HAVE THE SUPPORT AMONG
THE WORKERS THAT IT CLAIMS TO HAVE. ITS OWN MEMBERS MAY
EVEN FEEL IT OVER-REACHED ITSELF. TACTICALLY, THE STRIKE
CAME AT A BAD TIME--JUST ONE WEEK BEFORE THE END OF RAMAZAN
AND SEKER BAYRAM--A HOLIDAY WHEN MUNICIPAL WORKERS GO DOOR TO
DOOR SEEKING GRATUITIES FOR SERVICES RENDERED DURING THE PAST

YEAR. WITH BUSES NOT RUNNING AND GARBAGE PILING UP, WORKERS
WERE UNLIKELY TO FIND A GENEROUS AND SYMPATHETIC PUBLIC. FINALLY,
DISK FINDS ITS OFFICES CLOSED AND ITS FILES SEIZED BY COURT ORDER AND
HUNDREDS OF ITS MEMBERS ACROSS THE COUNTRY UNDER ARREST.

9. NEVERTHELESS, DISK HAS SUCCEEDED IN KEEPING TUNC
AND TURK-IS UNDER PRESSURE. TUNC AND TURK-IS HAVE BEEN
FORCED TO RETHINK THEIR STRATEGY ON THE STATE SECURITY
COURTS BILL AND MAY BE FORCED TO TAKE A TOUGHER STAND
AGAINST THE NATIONAL FRONT GOVERNMENT ON THIS ISSUE AS
WELL AS OTHER PROBLEMS IT IS HAVING WITH DEMIREL'S
COALITION PARTNER, THE NATIONAL SALVATION PARTY. TURK-IS
EXECUTIVE BOARD MEMBERS IN FACT, HAVE RECENTLY BEEN
QUOTED AS SAYING THAT THEY MAY HAVE TO ENGAGE IN RESISTANCE
THEMSELVES OVER LABOR ISSUES. IN THE CONTINUING FEUD BETWEEN

TURK-IS AND DISK, HOWEVER, SUCH ACTION COULD NOT
BE TAKEN UNTIL DISK'S MOVE COLLAPSED, FOR, IN THE WORDS OF
A TURK-IS BOARD MEMBER, "ACTION TAKEN BEFORE DISK'S FUNERAL
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WILL ONLY RESURRECT THEM".
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: MEETINGS, POLITICAL PARTIES, POLITICAL LEADERS, LABOR STRIKES, STRIKE SETTLEMENT
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 23 SEP 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: powellba
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976ANKARA07313
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760359-0960
From: ANKARA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760930/aaaaazcb.tel
Line Count: 234
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 5
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 76 ANKARA A-79, 76 ANKARA 7121, 76 ISTANBUL 3740
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: powellba
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 22 JUN 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <22 JUN 2004 by ellisoob>; APPROVED <22 OCT 2004 by powellba>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: DISK "SPONTANEOUS" STRIKE CALLED-OFF
TAGS: PINT, ELAB, TU
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006